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Navajo Nation and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Applauds the Veterinary Stock Pile Exercise *A Historic Event on Navajoland*



(L to R) Rodney White, Director of National Veterinary Stockpile; USDA Under Secretary Edward Avalos; President Ben Shelly; Vangie Curley-Thomas, Assistant Director of Div. of Natural Resources; Glenda Davis, Program Manager of NV&LP; Dr. Kelly Upshaw, NV&LP; front a presenter, wearing personal protective gear.

Window Rock, AZ – The first-ever Navajo Nation Veterinary Stockpile Full Scale Logistics Exercise was deemed a success by President Ben Shelly and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Under Secretary Edward Avalos.

President Shelly emphasized the importance of the full-scale exercise, “It demonstrates the commitment of the Navajo Veterinary and Livestock Program to protect Navajo Nation livestock, our livelihood and a Navajo Way of life. I commend everyone for their commitment and participation.”

Under Secretary Edward Avalos also praised the historic event as a first, on tribal lands.

“The exercise provides hands on experience, it identifies practices and limitations,” he said. “The end result—use the best practice to be effective to fight a real disease outbreak,” he said.

Today’s exercise allowed tribal personnel to learn the Navajo Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) request process between tribal and federal agencies in the event of an animal disease outbreak. Secondly, to validate the Navajo Nation’s NVS Tribal Plan through hands-on experience in warehouse operations. It helped personnel identify planning gaps, shortfalls, or limitations that could impair the Navajo Nation’s ability to receive and distribute NVS countermeasures in a real emergency.

After President Shelly explained to Under Secretary Avalos and staff, the significance of the Navajo Nation Seal, which depicts images of horses, sheep and cattle, he then presented the seal to Under Secretary Avalos.

“It is a Navajo tradition to have horses, they are sacred and blessed. With gas prices ever increasing we may return to horses for transportation,” added President Shelly.

Both the President and the Under Secretary were presented with a certificate of participation from the

Partners in the Full Scale Logistics Exercise include representatives of the USDA, Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Department of Agriculture, Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources, the Ute Mountain Tribe and the Hopi Nation.

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